

TEXT OF TELEGRAM 84ISLAMA007820

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ACTION RP-10

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 AID-00 OIC-02 IO-15 NEA-06
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P 150217Z APR 84
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4373
INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE POUCH
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR POUCH

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DEPARTMENT FOR RP/ASIA - BLANEY AND HARRIS
GENEVA FOR REFCOUNS

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: SREF, AF, PK
SUBJECT: AFGHAN REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN: EDUCATION STUDIES
REF: (A) STATE 097451; (B) ISLAMABAD 2906

1. SUMMARY. WHILE WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE (SEE REF B)
THAT THE USG SHOULD AVOID INVOLVEMENT IN TOUCHY ISSUES
OF EDUCATION FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES, WE NOTE PROGRESS IN
THE AREA OF CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR AFGHAN REFUGEE
CHILDREN. TWO VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, THE INTERNATIONAL
RESCUE COMMITTEE (IRC) AND INTERAID, ARE UNDERTAKING
PROJECTS IN REFUGEE EDUCATION ABOVE PRIMARY SCHOOL
LEVEL. IRC IS MAKING A STUDY OF SECONDARY AND HIGHER
EDUCATION ISSUES, WHILE INTERAID HAS ESTABLISHED
SCHOOLS FOR MIDDLE AND SECONDARY STUDENTS. SOONER
OR LATER WE EXPECT TO BE APPROACHED FOR FINANCIAL
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SUPPORT OF EDUCATION PROJECTS. END SUMMARY.

2. WHILE WE MAINTAIN THE VIEW THAT DIRECT U.S. INVOLVE-
MENT IN THE SENSITIVE ISSUE OF AFGHAN REFUGEE EDUCATION
IS NOT NOW INDICATED, WE RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO EDUCATE
REFUGEES BEYOND THE PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL AND WE KEEP
IN TOUCH WITH THOSE ACTIVE IN THIS AREA. REFOFF SPOKE
RECENTLY TO INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE (IRC)
REPRESENTATIVE IN PESHAWAR. IRC HAS COMMISSIONED A

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STUDY OF AFGHAN REFUGEE SECONDARY/HIGHER EDUCATION ISSUES. AFTER HAVING CONSULTED WITH APPROPRIATE GOP AUTHORITIES - PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONER FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES, RUSTAM SHAH, AND HIS EDUCATION CELL CHIEF - IRC HAS BEEN GIVEN THE GO-AHEAD TO ASSESS ALL AFGHAN REFUGEE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS BEYOND THE PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL. NWFP COMMISSIONER FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES RUSTAM SHAH MOHMAND REPORTEDLY SAID HE WOULD CONSIDER IRC'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES RELATING TO MIDDLE AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND WOULD EVEN ENTERTAIN SUGGESTIONS RELATING TO A FREE AFGHAN UNIVERSITY.

3. IRC HAS EMPLOYED AN AFGHAN EDUCATOR WITH IMPRESSIVE CREDENTIALS TO OVERSEE ITS SURVEY. ABDUL GHAFUR (M.A., UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT - 1973) HAD ONCE SERVED AS CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONER IN THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN AND WAS THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPECIAL ADVISOR ON EDUCATION IN PRE-1978 REGIMES. HE RECENTLY ARRIVED IN PAKISTAN AFTER SPENDING TWO YEARS AS A POLITICAL PRISONER IN KABUL. MR. GHAFUR ESTIMATES IT WILL TAKE SIX MONTHS TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE PAPER ON AFGHAN REFUGEE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS BEYOND THE PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL. COMMENT: HAVING CONVERSED WITH GHAFUR AT LENGTH, WE BELIEVE HE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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IS AN EXCELLENT CHOICE AS SURVEY COORDINATOR. END COMMENT.

4. ON-GOING EDUCATION FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES BEYOND THE PRIMARY LEVEL IS PRESENTLY BEING UNDERTAKEN ON A SIGNIFICANT SCALE BY INTERAID, A CHRISTIAN ECUMENICAL VOLAG OPERATING THROUGHOUT PAKISTAN. INTER-AID HAS TAKEN UPON ITSELF THE TASK OF EDUCATING APPROXIMATELY 5,000 AFGHAN MIDDLE AND SECONDARY STUDENTS. VOLAG CLAIMS ITS SCHOOLS HAVE THE BACKING OF BOTH FUNDAMENTALIST AND MODERATE AFGHAN POLITICAL PARTIES. INTERAID'S PESHAWAR REPRESENTATIVE SAYS THAT HE HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY A COALITION OF POLITICAL PARTIES WITH A REQUEST THAT AN "OPEN UNIVERSITY" FOR AFGHANS BE ESTABLISHED. INTERAID WOULD LIKE TO EXPAND ITS POST-PRIMARY EDUCATIONAL FUNCTION BUT WOULD NEED UNHCR AND, POSSIBLY, OTHER DONOR SUPPORT TO DO SO.

5. COMMENT: IRC AND INTERAID INITIATIVES FILL AN IMPORTANT NEED. WE HAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT EMBASSY WILL BE APPROACHED EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH THE UNHCR FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ONCE NEEDS ARE ESTABLISHED AND EDUCATIONAL SCHEMES TAKE FORM. END COMMENT. AS STATED PREVIOUSLY, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT IT IS INADVISABLE FOR THE

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USG TO BE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES. HINTON

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